



**METROPOLITAN
TRANSPORTATION
COMMISSION**

Agenda Item 2

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**Legislation Committee
May 9, 2008
Minutes**

Vice Chair Yeager called the committee to order at 10:40 a.m. Members attending: Chu, Dodd, Haggerty, Halsted, and Sperring. Also attending: Commissioners Bates and Glover.

Minutes

Minutes of the April 11, 2008 meeting were approved following a motion by Commissioner Chu that was seconded by Commissioner Sperring.

Legislative History

Ellen Griffin of MTC staff highlighted bills of particular interest to the committee in the April 30, 2008 edition of the Legislative History.

In response to Ms. Griffin reporting that Assemblyman DeSaulnier's AB 2870 to create the California Blueprint Implementation Commission had been amended for the Bay Area member of the Commission to be a person who serves on both MTC and ABAG, Commissioner Haggerty asked who would make the appointment. Ms. Griffin said the governor makes the appointment.

Commissioner Bates asked about the status of a bill on transit village developments (AB 1221 by Assemblywoman Ma); Ms. Griffin said it had passed out of the Senate Local Government Committee. "It's biggest hurdle," said Commissioner Bates.

State Legislation

Chair Yeager commented how organized and efficient the Commission's annual day in Sacramento was for annual meetings with Bay Area legislators this year (May 7).

AB 2650 (Carter) continues Caltrans' assumption of National Environmental Policy Act responsibilities until 2010, and extends two reporting requirements that Caltrans has, all under an ongoing federal pilot program (California had been one of five states named in the program). Commissioner Chu moved a position on AB 2650 of "support and seek an amendment" to include language stating that Caltrans should give equal priority to environmental review of local or regional transportation projects. Commissioner Haggerty seconded, and the bill was unanimously referred to Commission.

SB 3034 (Galgiani) updates and expands upon provisions of the Safe, Reliable High-Speed Passenger Train Bond Act for the 21st Century, the \$9.95-billion general obligation bond measure slated to appear on the November 2008 ballot. SB 3034 contains many provisions, including one that makes the Altamont rail corridor eligible for bond money and federal revenue. Ms. Griffin noted that last year MTC reaffirmed its support for the Pacheco Pass alignment, by way of Resolution No. 3829. Following discussion, Commissioner Haggerty moved a position on SB 3034 of "support and seek

amendments”: 1) to include an additional \$2 billion for connectivity, and 2) that connectivity in the Bay Area be as defined by MTC. Commissioner Spering seconded the motion. Commissioner Chu asked if additional clarification of rail corridors was needed; Commissioner Haggerty said it was not. Commissioner Yeager asked if the measure was still likely a “go” for the November 2008 ballot; Randy Rentschler said it was.

Federal Legislation

Federal Transportation Authorization – Mr. Rentschler said that this was the first time in 20 years that federal transportation authorization was beginning anew. For a sense of the calendar, he reviewed specific elements in a timeline of key actions. This item was for information only.

Gas Tax Holiday – Following Mr. Rentschler’s presentation of a draft letter to the Bay Area congressional delegation in opposition to the suggestion by two presidential candidates to suspend the 18.4-cent-per-gallon federal excise tax on gasoline for this summer’s travel season, Commissioner Haggerty said he thought that the letter could have been written even more strongly. With a motion by Commissioner Spering and a second by Commissioner Halsted, it was unanimously approved to oppose such a gas tax moratorium and direct staff to do so via the letter to Speaker Pelosi. Given time sensitivities, the Commission’s urgency procedures were invoked to be able to send the letter immediately.

Commissioner Spering asked staff to clarify the differences between an “oppose” position and a “support and seek amendments” position. Staff said that to take a “support and seek amendments” position is to be in support of the measure whether the amendments are made or not.

Tom Bulger’s Report – was received by the committee.

Other Business/Public Comment/Adjourn

There was no other business or public comment. The committee’s next meeting was scheduled for June 13, 2008. The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.